

Maienschein Opposes Miramar as a Regional Airport

I oppose Miramar as a site for a new regional airport. There are too many factors against it. Miramar is an ideal military airbase, but it is a dangerous, expensive, and short-sighted choice for a new commercial airport. I am extremely disappointed that the Airport Authority chose Miramar as its recommended airport location, ignoring the many reasons Miramar should remain a military site rather than a commercial airport.

Not only am I opposed because of my concerns such as noise, safety, and traffic congestion, but also the surrounding infrastructure is inadequate. For example, technical consultants have concluded that a five-mile segment of Interstate 15, and part of State Route 163 north of Route 52, would have to be moved east. This would have an extremely negative impact on our quality of life.

In addition, Congress and the Pentagon also adamantly oppose relinquishing any part of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar as a regional airport for San Diego. Secretary of the Navy, Donald C. Winter, has stated that national defense needs preclude new or dual use of Miramar, or any other San Diego military installation. In fact, the Airport Authority's decision seems to even be a violation of a 1996 law passed by Congress that prohibits a commercial airport at this location.

Besides national defense, there are also economic considerations. According to the latest Forbes rankings, San Diego is now the fifth richest city in the nation. One of the keys cited by Forbes is San Diego's strong military economic base which helps to buffer against extreme income swings. Miramar is one of the key components of the military presence in San Diego, and the military's presence here is a cornerstone of our economy.

Miramar is not, as some have suggested, our region's only option. That is why I repeatedly urged the Airport Authority Board to reject Miramar in favor of a viable site. During my term in office I have communicated my position with the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of Defense, and even the President, and I'm hopeful they will intervene against this proposal from the Airport Authority.

If Miramar does appear on the ballot this fall, I will go directly to the voters with the message to reject Miramar as a site for a regional airport.